



ҚАЗАҚСТАН РЕСПУБЛИКАСЫНЫҢ  
ЕҚЫҰ ЖАНЫНДАҒЫ ТҰРАҚТЫ ӨКІЛДІГІ

PERMANENT MISSION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN TO THE OSCE

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**Statement by Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to  
the OSCE, Ambassador Kairat Abdрахmanov  
at the 768<sup>th</sup> meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council  
9 July 2009**

*Current issues*

Madame Chair,

On July 1-2, 2009 Astana hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

Over the last few years the Congress, which was initiated by President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev and supported by the United Nations, has been internationally recognized as an effective platform of dialogue for global peace and the advancement of tolerance, because Kazakhstan is considered as an example of a successful model for the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic and religious communities. It has gained wide recognition from other major international fora such as the Alliance of Civilizations, the Community of St Egidio, the Asia House, the Tony Blair Foundation and many others.

Delegations from different directions of three world religions, as well as traditional religions took part in the work of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress. More than 60 delegations from different religious confessions, honorable guests and representatives from international organizations, such as the United Nations, Islamic Conference Organization, OSCE and UNESCO took part in the Congress. We are thankful to Secretary General of the OSCE for his response to Kazakhstan's invitation and taking part in the Congress.

The Head of State in his welcoming speech admitted that the dialogue between the leaders of world and traditional religions based on common aspects and exact information on each other opens wide prospects for mutual cooperation and contributes to overcoming such negative manifestations of our time as violence, fanaticism, extremism and terrorism. This dialogue as a means

of disputes settling was opposed to methods of violence and terror in the interdenominational and interethnic relations.

In this respect the Congress has been a major contribution by Kazakhstan to the global process of inter-cultural dialogue. An open intercultural, inter-religious dialogue is one of the key issues of Kazakhstan's internal and foreign policy. Kazakhstan has adhered and will adhere to this principle on all levels of ensuring global and regional security.

In the said regard, one of the significant initiatives of Kazakhstan, supported by the United Nations Organization, is declaration of 2010 "International Year of rapprochement of cultures".

During the two days of the Congress a wide range of issues related to the role of religious leaders in building a world based on tolerance, mutual respect and cooperation were discussed during the Congress. Sessions were devoted to such themes as: "Moral and spiritual values, and world ethics", "Dialogue and cooperation", and "Solidarity, especially in times of crisis".

During the Congress Kazakhstan proposed that the Secretariat of the Congress jointly with the International Centre of culture and religions, created in Astana, might think of an issue of creation of religious leaders Council for a dialogue and cooperation with other fora and international organizations, the activity of which be aimed at a dialogue of cultures and economic interaction. This approach was supported by the participants of the Congress.

The Forum resulted in the adoption of an "Appeal by the participants in the Third Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions to the world community", calling on religious and political leaders, public figures, scientists, the mass media, and the global community to:

1. continuously support and facilitate the efforts of religious leaders and organizations towards genuine inter-religious dialogue, and to address the urgent problems of humanity so as to find proper solutions, thereby recognizing the positive role that religions can and should play in society;

2. promote comprehension of the specific character of each religion and culture and support dialogue among religions and civilizations in order to enhance mutual understanding and respect through education;

3. counteract the manipulation of religions or religious differences for political ends so as to preserve the unity of the society in the respect for legitimate diversity;

4. deepen mutual understanding by means of cultural exchanges, and cooperation in the field of education, always protecting the right of religious freedom and its effective implementation;

5. demonstrate greater moral and spiritual strength and genuine solidarity in pursuing just solutions to the economic, financial, social and environmental problems plaguing the globalized world;

In conclusion, the participants of the Congress noted that the discussions had once again demonstrated the interest of all the spiritual leaders gathered in Astana in engaging in dialogue. All the statements had reflected a common concern regarding the destiny of the world in its diversity, as well as a pursuit of ways to enhance harmony and understanding among states, nations and different religions.

The participants of the Congress, expressed gratitude to the people of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its leader for their efforts to promote a culture of concord and cooperation among peoples of different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds within Kazakhstan and beyond, as well as for their efforts to establish a dialogue between the followers of different religions and civilizations.

It was also decided to hold the Fourth Congress in 2012 in Astana.

Thank you for your attention.